

STATE OF OHIO

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND CORRECTION

SUBJECT: Wiccan Religious Policy	PAGE <u>1</u> OF <u>4</u> . NUMBER: 72-REG-09
RULE/CODE REFERENCE:	SUPERSEDES: 72-REG-09 dated 03/05/10
RELATED ACA STANDARDS:	EFFECTIVE DATE: January 20, 2016
	APPROVED: 

I. AUTHORITY

This policy is issued in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 5120.01 which delegates to the Director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction the authority to manage and direct the total operations of the Department and to establish such rules and regulations as the Director prescribes.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and guidance to chaplains, administrators, and staff in managing and providing for the religious activities and practices of inmates in the custody of the Department. This policy is intended to be permissive rather than restrictive. The observances and religious items listed are generally approved accommodations for qualified inmates wishing to practice the subject faith.

III. APPLICABILITY

The policy applies to employees, independent contractors, and volunteers of the Department who provide or assist in providing religious services.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Altar Cloth - Used in rituals to cover the surface of the table or other surface in use.

Book of Shadows - Scriptural book for practicing Wiccans, written in the practitioner's own handwriting. Texts, rites, and prayers in languages other than English may require increased review and may be withheld for investigation and translation.

Pentacle - The symbol of the five-pointed pentagram, with the point up, worn as a pendant.

Rune - A stone or card representing the runic alphabet believed to have powers and used in divination magic.

Stones (minerals) - Round or polished stones carried in a pocket or used in rituals.

Wand - A wooden stick used for the practice of magic.

Wiccan - One who practices a faith of nature-based worship, or the worship of the ancient gods and goddesses of paganism. Wicca is the name for the faith group or tradition, and magic is the name for the arts of the occult or hidden practices.

V. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction that inmates may subscribe to any religious belief they choose. Inmate religious practices, as opposed to belief, may be subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions. Inmate participation in religious activities shall be voluntary. The opportunity for inmates to engage in particular religious practices shall be subject to the legitimate departmental or institutional interests and concerns, including security, safety, health, discipline, rehabilitation, order, and the limitations of and allocation of resources.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. Congregate Services

Where a qualified volunteer leader is available (such as a High Priestess/Priest for Wicca), and there are a significant number of inmates registered as Wiccan, arrangements may be made to hold a congregate religious service. Where congregate services cannot be provided, the individuals shall practice their rites individually (as "solitary practitioners"). Wiccan inmates may not lead congregate observances. For purposes of this policy, determination of an inmate's standing or membership as a practitioner of the Wiccan faith shall be made either by the faith leader providing Wiccan religious services for the institution housing that individual or by an appropriate faith leader consulted by the Religious Services Administrator.

B. Individual Worship Practice

Individuals may practice some rituals as well as solitary observances such as meditation within their own living area. The use of some ritual items permitted to inmates may be restricted to use under supervision in the Religious Services area. For example, candles are restricted to use in Religious Services.

C. Holy Days

Holy Days associated with the Wiccan faith group include Imbolc (February), Beltane (May), Lamas or Lughnasadh (August), Samhain or All Hallows Eve (October), and Yule (December) as well as dates relative to the lunar and solar cycles.

D. Medical Treatment: There are no specific medical treatment requirements for the Wiccan faith group.

E. Work Proscriptions: According to the governing body of the Wiccan faith group, there are no required work days off. However, an inmate may request a day off work for Holy Days as

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outlined in Section VI.C pursuant to Department Policy 72-REG-02, Religious Accommodations.

F. Religious Leaders

All congregate services must be led or supervised by approved religious leaders including either outside volunteers, independent contractors, or employees of DRC. There are to be no inmate led groups.

G. Death and burial: There is no specific death or burial requirements for the Wiccan faith group.

H. Religious Property

The following items are authorized for individual use; however, no handmade religious items are authorized other than artwork of a religious nature otherwise acceptable within the institutions, the ritual salt, olive oil, and candles.

1. Medallion – Pentagram (five-pointed star with single point upwards) no larger than two inches.
2. Religious Writings - All religious material sent in to inmates to be screened and approved by the Chaplain may be denied only on the criteria set forth in Department policy 75-MAL-02, Printed Material. Pursuant to Department policy 55-SPC-02, Special Management Procedures, approved Wiccan inmates in segregation may have one religious book which for this faith group is the Book of Shadows, a handwritten journal-type ritual book. However, approved Wiccan inmates in segregation may have more than one religious book if approved by the Managing Officer.
3. Altar Cloth – Solid color cloth, white, brown or green not larger than 20x20 inches.
4. Wand (7 in. by 5/16 in.) - Approved stone(s) may be attached to either or both end(s) of the wand. Total approved length is 7 inches. Wands must not be sharpened or have a pointed end.
5. Tarot cards and Rune cards – One deck each per inmate (may not have two of one, but one of each) no larger than 4 x 6 inches.
6. Small bowls (3 x 5 inches.) – Wood, clay or plastic. Limit three (3) per inmate.
7. Sea or table salt - One (1) ounce limit.
8. Olive oil - One (1) ounce limit.
9. Stones or minerals – Limit seven (7). Stones must be rounded and not pointed and no larger than 1 ½ inches in length.

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10. Storage box – 7 inches x 15 inches by 5 inches deep. The storage box shall be a clear plastic “shoe box” type and may be handmade of approved material if approved by the Managing Officer. – Maximum value of purchased box is \$12.00.
11. Sources for items - Inmates may order these approved items through vendors such as the Llewellyn or Azure Green catalogs.